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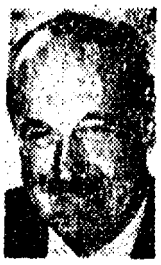
The Washington Merry-Go-Round

Kefauver Wants Special Prosecutor

By Drew Pearson

Senator Kefauver hasn't said much about it publicly, but he has discussed with Senate friends the idea of asking the Senate to appoint special counsel to prosecute those responsible for planting Adolphe Wenzell of the big First Boston Finance Company inside the Budget Bureau for the purpose of hatching the Dixon-Yates deal.



Pearson

Appointment of special Senate counsel would be an unusual procedure. It would mean going over the head of Attorney General Brownell who is supposed to prosecute for the Government, and saying in effect that the Senate had no confidence in Brownell.

However, Sen. Kefauver figures Brownell will never move against officials of his own Administration, including Mr. Eisenhower's Budget Director, Rowland Hughes, and Admiral Strauss, chairman of the Atomic Energy Commission. And there seems to be some reason to back Kefauver up.

First, Brownell is too busy trying to prosecute members of the Truman Administration for matters which Brownell knew about three years ago and which need not have waited for action till an election year.

Second, Kefauver points out that Brownell, while sending a staff of 13 prosecutors to St. Louis to "get Truman," has completely neglected the conflicts of interest of Former Secretary of the Air Force Harold Talbott and Peter Strobel, former Public Buildings Administrator

Prosecutor Precedents

Kefauver has been looking up certain precedents for the appointment of special counsel to go over the head of the Justice Department. One is the appointment of Louis D. Brandeis as special people's counsel in probing wages and hours and the Ballinger-Pinchot case. Brandeis did such a notable job for the public that he was later appointed to the Supreme Court.

Another possible precedent was the appointment of Owen J. Roberts and Former Sen. Atlee Pomerene of Ohio to prosecute Albert Fall, Harding's Secretary of the Interior, and Attorney General Harry Daugherty, in the Teapot Dome scandal. The country had lost confidence in the Justice Department, so Calvin Coolidge appointed these two to go over the head of the Justice Department as special prosecutors. Like Brandeis, Roberts did such a good job that he, too, was appointed to the Supreme Court.

In the recent Dixon-Yates case, Kefauver plans to point to various Brownell failures, the latest being his dismissal of charges against the Greek shipping magnate, A. S. Onassis, who happened to have been a client of Brownell's when the Attorney General was practicing law in New York.

The case against Onassis involved buying American ships, then transferring them to foreign flags. The case was largely developed by the Justice Department under Mr. Truman, though the final indictment was brought under Brownell. Brownell's subordinates did not know at the time, however, that their chief, the Attorney General, and his law firm, Lord, Day & Lord, had represented both Onassis personally and his company, U. S. Petroleum Carriers. They suddenly found that they had indicted the client who had been advised by Brownell and his law firm that it was quite legal for him to transfer American ships to foreign flags.

Naturally, all this would have been highly embarrassing if the Onassis case had ever come to trial. It would have shown that Brownell as Attorney General was prosecuting a man for doing something which Brownell as a private lawyer had advised him to do.

So just before Christmas the criminal case against Onassis was quietly dropped.

These are some of the reasons Sen. Kefauver wants to appoint special Senate prosecutors to examine the whole Dixon-Yates deal and other conflicts of interest such as Harold Talbott and Peter Strobel.

Merry-Go-Round

Sen. Jenner of Indiana has been whispering around the Capitol that his senior colleague, Sen. Capehart, will be whipped in Indiana next year by a quarter million votes . . . One Congressman who didn't let any grass grow under his feet this summer is young Jim Wright of Texas. Wright, 33 years old and a freshman in the House of Representatives, delivered 104 speeches to his ever-patient constituents, also appeared on 11 television programs during the three and a half months he was back in the Lone Star State. He didn't travel abroad . . . Congressman Victor Anfuso of Brooklyn favors the death penalty for dope peddlers. He contends they're committing a crime worse than murder by degrading our youth . . . Newsmen covering the United Nations agree that the project with the most captivating title is "SUNFED," the Special United Nations Fund for Economic Development. SUNFED is the U. N. version of former President Truman's "Point Four" program for helping backward countries threatened by com-

[illegible] nomism. It does not refer to Key West. . . . President Eisenhower has promised to back Secretary of Commerce Weeks 100 per cent in the firing of Civil Aeronautics Administrator Fred Lee.

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